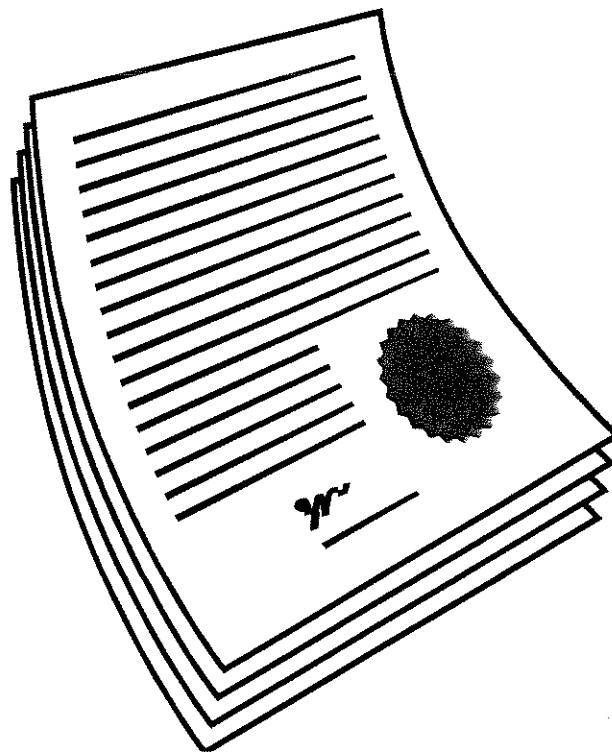


California Child and Family Services Review


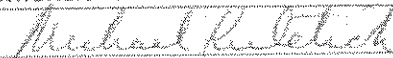
Calaveras County System Improvement Plan *Update*



Calaveras County System Improvement Plan

I. SIP Plan Components

SIP Cover Sheet

California's Child and Family Services Review System Improvement Plan	
County:	Calaveras
Responsible County Child Welfare Agency:	Calaveras Works and Human Services Agency
Period of Plan:	July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2011
Period of Outcomes Data:	Quarter ending March 31, 2008
Date Submitted:	
County Contact Person for County System Improvement Plan	
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Submitted by each agency for the children under its care	
Submitted by:	County Child Welfare Agency Director (Lead Agency)
Name:	Mary Sawicki
Signature:	
Submitted by:	County Chief Probation Officer
Name:	Michael Kriletich
Signature:	

Outcome/Systemic Factor: Rate of Re-Entry into Foster Care following Reunification

County's Current Performance:

According to the April 2008 report for the third quarter of 2007, our most recent performance indicates that our re-entry rate into foster care has remained virtually unchanged at 12.1%. We recognize that there is a need for collaboration between community agencies and the need for enhanced post reunification services.

***Update:** According to the April 2009 report for the third quarter of 2008, our most recent performance indicates that our re-entry rate into foster care has steadily increased to 18.8%, a total increase of 6.7%. During the corresponding time period, the number of children that were placed into foster care has decreased 14.5%; 79 in October 2007, 77 in January 2008, 75 in April 2008, and 69 in July 2008. This reduction of children placed into foster care significantly affects this performance indicator resulting in a higher rate of re-entry into foster care. In fact, the total number of children that re-entered the foster care system within twelve months of exiting is reduced to six from a high of ten in each of the three preceding quarters.*

Improvement Goal 1.0.

The rate of Re-Entry into foster care following Reunification will be reduced.

Strategy 1. 1

Implement Family Preservation Services within three months of the initiation of Family Maintenance Services.

***Update:** The Family Preservation Services program has been developed and has been implemented. A total of five families were served, one family was served as a result of their transition from Family Reunification Services to Family Maintenance Services. This family has not re-entered foster care. Four additional families were provided Family Preservation Services to prevent their initial entry into foster care. Three of the four families did not enter foster care resulting in a 75.0% success rate.*

Strategy Rationale

Preliminary analysis shows that the majority of cases re-entered into foster care during the Family Maintenance services stage of the case within the range of 4 to 8 months. If intensive services are provided within three months of the child returning to the care of the parents under family maintenance services, re-entry into foster care will be reduced.

Milestone	1.1.1 Social workers will receive necessary ongoing training as to Structured Decision Making and the Family Preservation Process.	Timeframe	Ongoing <i>Update: Social Workers received training regarding the Family Preservation process on 6/25/2007 and 7/16/2007. Social Workers received Structured Decision Making (SDM) training on 6/6/2007 and 6/7/2007. All New Hire Social Workers received (SDM) training on 10/10/2007, 10/11/2007, 1/16/2008, and 1/17/2008. All Social Workers have received necessary training. There are current efforts to secure on-site SDM refresher training to be provided by UC-Davis.</i>	Assigned to	All Children's Services social workers
	1.1.2 Social Workers will routinely complete necessary out-of-home Reunification Re-assessments through Structured Decision Making process to determine if a child may be safely returned to the care of their family.		6 months (10/1/2008) <i>Update: According to Safe Measures®, the timeliness of Reunification Risk Re-assessments have ranged from a high of 81.0% in June 2008, to a low of 63.2% in February 2009. Improvement in this milestone continues to be needed. The target date has been shifted to 10/1/2009.</i>		All Children's Services social workers

<p>1.1.3 A formalized referral to the Family Preservation program will be completed and routinely utilized by Social Work staff.</p>	<p>9 months (1/1/2009)</p> <p>Update: A formalized referral to the Family Preservation program has been completed and is utilized by Social Work staff when referring families to this service.</p>	<p>All Children's Services social workers</p>
<p>1.1.4 All Families will receive Family Preservation services to begin within the first 90 days of the initiation of Family Maintenance Services.</p>	<p>12 months (4/30/2009)</p> <p>Update: One family was served by the Family Preservation Program as a result of their transition from Family Reunification Services to Family Maintenance Services. This family has not re-entered foster care. Additional progress is needed in this area to serve all families in need of Family Preservation Services when transitioning from Family Reunification Services to Family Maintenance Services. The target date has been shifted to 1/1/2010.</p>	<p>All Children's Services social workers</p>
<p>Strategy 1. 2 Social Workers will be outstationed at schools with the highest rates of re-entry into foster care.</p> <p>Update: Specific schools with the highest rates of re-entry into foster care are currently in the process of being identified. Preliminary reports indicate that families who reside in the community of San Andreas have the highest rates of re-entry, however schools serve multiple communities. Schools with the highest number of reports made since July 2008 are San Andreas Elementary School (31), Valley Springs Elementary School (29), and Calaveras High School</p>	<p>Strategy Rationale Preliminary analysis shows that there are distinct demographic areas within Calaveras County that have high rates of re-entry into foster care. An outstationed social worker is available to resolve issues and offer preventative services and therefore, reduce the risk that a child will re-enter into foster care.</p>	

<p>(21). There are factors that complicate the implementation of this strategy. Due to budgetary constraints and hiring freezes, vacant social worker positions are not currently being filled. A secondary factor is that due to the rotating re-assignment of school officials at the end of the school year, this strategy should be implemented prior to the beginning of the next school year.</p>					
Milestone	1.2.1 Identify the target age and geographic location with the highest rate of re-entry into foster care.	Timeframe	6 months (10/1/2008) Update: A previous review of cases that have re-entered into foster care indicates that the highest rate has occurred within the Calaveras Unified School District. In particular, families residing in the community of San Andreas. There was no significant difference in the ages of children attending school and the number of reports received. There are a total of four schools located in San Andreas, all schools serve multiple communities, and therefore this objective can not be isolated based on the community where the family resides. A Business Objects report indicates that in 2008, the school that reported suspected child abuse to Child Welfare was San Andreas Elementary School. Since this school accesses Child Welfare most often, the school will most likely be most receptive to the implementation of this strategy.	Assigned to	Services Program Manager, Children's Services Supervisors

	1.2.2 Arrange an agreement between CWHSA and the school(s) where the identified target population attends.		9 months (1/1/2009) <i>Update: This continues to remain a goal for the next school year. The target date will be shifted to the middle of the next school year (12/1/2009) to ensure consistency with school staff.</i>		Services Program Manager, Children's Services Supervisors, Services Staff Analyst, Foster Youth Services Coordinator
	1.2.3. Social Workers and school personnel at the identified school will receive necessary training as to the social worker's duties and responsibilities.		12 months (4/30/2009) <i>Update: This continues to remain a goal for the next year. The target date will be shifted to 5/1/2010.</i>		Services Program Manager, Children's Services Supervisors, Selected Children's Services Social Worker(s)
Milestone	1.2.4 Arrange and maintain weekly social worker "office hours" at the identified school(s) in conjunction with the Differential Response program.	Timeframe	18 months (1/1/2010) <i>Update: This continues to remain a goal for the next year. The target date will be shifted to 5/1/2010.</i>	Assigned to	Services Program Manager, Children's Services Supervisors, Selected Children's Services Social Worker(s)
	1.2.5 Evaluate the impact of the outstationed social worker(s) on the rate of re-entry into foster care in the target population.		3 years (5/1/2011) <i>Update: This continues to remain a long-term goal.</i>		Services Program Manager, Children's Services Supervisors, Selected Children's Services Social Worker(s)
Strategy 1. 3 Collaborative Programs (such as Team Decision Making (TDM), Family Group Decision Making (FGDM), Wraparound Services, Differential Response (DR), Beyond Talking and Linkages) will be utilized to assist families with coordinating post-reunification services with multiple agencies. <i>Update: Multiple collaborative programs are in various stages of implementation. TDMs, DR, Beyond Talking, and the Linkages program are fully operational and serving families to assist with</i>			Strategy Rationale Through a collaborative approach, multiple agencies can coordinate efforts to provide non-duplicative services. These agencies will also be responsible for meeting the needs of the family post reunification. It is through this multi-disciplinary effort that service providers will engage families following case closure and therefore reduce the rate of re-entry into foster care.		

<p>coordinating post-reunification services. The Wraparound Services program is currently in the planning stage. The social worker assigned to the DR program also coordinates the TDM meetings. Furthermore, this social worker is a member of the Linkages Committee therefore integrating services through multiple collaborative programs. In March 2009, the Calaveras County Superior Court implemented a dependency mediation process to collaborate with the family and child welfare. One family has since been served as a result of the Court Dependency Mediation program.</p>					
Milestone	1.3.1 Social Worker assigned to lead TDM and FGDM will be identified and receive applicable training.	Timeframe	<p>9 months (1/1/2009)</p> <p>Update: A Social Worker has been identified and assigned to implement the Team Decision Making program and facilitate meetings.</p>	Assigned to	<p>Services Program Manager, Children's Services Supervisors, All Children's Services Social Workers</p>
	1.3.2 All Children's Social Workers and applicable Community Agencies will receive the necessary training as to applicable collaborative programs that are available to families.		<p>12 months (4/30/2009)</p> <p>Update: Necessary training for TDM was completed on 3/28/2008. Additionally, the Research Center for Family Focused Practice conducted Integrated Service Training on 5/8/2008 and Coordinated Case Planning training on 6/3/2008.</p>		<p>Services Program Manager, Children's Services Supervisors, All Children's Services Social Workers</p>

	1.3.3 TDM and FGDM will be implemented and regularly utilized in casework practice.		18 months (1/1/2010) <i>Update: TDM is regularly utilized in casework practice. It is the policy of the Beyond Talking program to conduct a TDM meeting at prescribed intervals during the case process. Further, CWHSA policy is to conduct a TDM meeting if the placement of a child is in jeopardy. It is still the intention of the agency to implement TDM meetings to diffuse a family crisis and reduce the rate of re-entry into foster care.</i>		Services Program Manager, Children's Services Supervisors, All Children's Services Social Workers
Milestone	1.3.4 Families will be routinely referred for collaborative services at least 90 days prior to case closure to ensure continuity of care through post-reunification services upon exit from the child welfare system.	Timeframe	3 years (5/1/2011) <i>Update: This continues to remain a long-term goal.</i>	Assigned to	All Children's Services Social Workers

Describe any additional systemic factors needing to be addressed that support the improvement plan goals.

There are current ongoing efforts in the use and the support of community-based service organizations (CBSOs) in the provision of services. Within the provision of services, there is the trend of a 'team approach' between recipients of services, the service providers, and Children's Services who are all working in tandem to achieve the goal of the protection of children. One organization that is often underutilized in the provision of services and the prevention of child maltreatment includes the educational system. Through the coordination and utilization of services within the already existing parameters of the educational system and Child Welfare System should provide the ideal marriage for the prevention of re-entry into foster care.

***Update:** Many of the educational providers employed by the school have utilized the Calaveras County Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meetings to discuss concerns that they have with families with community based service organizations. The Calaveras County MDT meets on a weekly basis. Conversely, a Children's Services representative is present during the monthly School Attendance Review Board meetings to review and discuss families who may be potentially in need of assistance through Child Welfare. Additionally, the Behavioral Health Services' Substance Abuse Program has weekly Child Case staffings to which CWHSA social workers may schedule specific cases in common for discussion. Due to budgetary constraints, many DR partners are no longer able to accommodate the staffing needs of this program. Recruitment of additional CBSO is a continued need.*

Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.

For each of the above listed strategies there is the common need for ongoing training as to the utilization of collaborative services both within Children's Services and CBSOs. There also appears to be a need for training as to the application of aspects learned into casework practice. Since prevention and post reunification services have been identified as the most significant factors that contribute to the rate of re-entry into foster care, training is needed in both arenas.

***Update:** Necessary training for TDM was completed on 3/28/2008 for all CWHSA social work staff. The Research Center for Family Focused Practice conducted Integrated Service Training on 5/8/2008 and Coordinated Case Planning training on 6/3/2008. The Calaveras County Linkages Committee has conducted two agency wide presentations involving all staff and one training with Calaveras County Behavioral Health Services. California Department of Social Services has conducted two trainings regarding the Wraparound Program involving Children's Services, Behavioral Health Services, and the Juvenile Probation Department. Children's Services and Behavioral Health Services attempt to meet on a monthly basis for CWDA Wraparound Subcommittee meetings.*

Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.

Many of the identified strategies rely on the premise of collaborative services and the utilization of CBSOs to reduce the rate of re-entry into foster care and therefore achieve this improvement goal. Close collaboration with our Behavioral Health Services and Juvenile Probation Department (among others) will be crucial in order to achieve success in our Wraparound Program. Additionally, although collaborative programs such as Linkages, Beyond Talking, and the MDT have been functioning in Calaveras County for a significant period of time, a community partnership with the education system is underutilized and often forgotten. It is through these newly identified community partners that will embrace a family, provide for their needs, and reduce the rate of re-entry into foster care.

Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.

Among the regulatory or statutory changes that are needed to support the accomplishment of reducing the rate of reduction into foster care is the need to relax privacy/confidentiality laws and allow for key community partners, particularly in the field of health care, to efficiently partner with other service providers.

***Update:** The ability to use funding in a flexible manner that allows additional CBSO's to join the DR Program and provide supportive services to families is still crucial to the success of the program.*

Outcome/Systemic Factor: Placement Stability**County's Current Performance:**

According to the April 2008 report for the 3rd quarter of 2007 (10/1/2006 to 9/30/2007), our most recent performance indicates that our placement stability rate for children placed less than twelve months has increased to 84.6%, children placed between twelve and twenty-four months has increased to 53.3%, and children placed more than twenty-four months has increased to 38.1%. Despite improvement, we recognize that there is still a need for reducing the number of out-of-home placement for our foster children.

Update: According to the April 2009 report for the 3rd quarter of 2008 (10/1/2007 to 9/30/2007), our most recent performance indicated that our placement stability rate for children placed less than twelve months has increased to 88.9% (40 out of 45 children), which exceeds the national standard of 86%. The placement stability rate for children placed between twelve and twenty-four months has increased to 79.2% (19 of 42 children), which exceeds the national standard of 65.4%. The placement stability rate for children placed more than twenty-four months has decreased to 28.1% (9 of 31 children), which is below the national standard of 41.8%.

Improvement Goal 2.0.

The number of placement changes for Calaveras County's foster children will be reduced.

Strategy 2. 1

Through collaboration with various community partner agencies, provide and/or enhance training for our Substitute Care Providers (SCPs).

Strategy Rationale

If our SCPs are given the proper training and support, the number of notices to move children will be reduced.

Milestone	2.1.1 Conduct analysis of the foster children who are currently in out-of-home placements to determine what the "typical" foster child looks like in Calaveras County.	Timeframe	6 months (10/01/2008) Update: Analysis was conducted in October 2008 and we found that our "typical" foster youth was a 14-year-old male with behavioral difficulties. Analysis should continue to be done on an annual basis to determine if the average has changed. Therefore, the timeframe will be adjusted to "on-going".	Assigned to	Services Program Manager
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<p>2.1.2 Continue to work with the Columbia College's Foster/Kin Advisory Board (FKAB) to develop a series of quarterly SCP trainings, the first of which will be a "Foster Care 101" type of training on what to expect from the "typical" foster child in Calaveras County.</p>	<p>6 months to 3 years (10/01/2008 to 4/30/2011)</p>	<p>Update: <i>Columbia College's FKAB has conducted two trainings to date: "Foster Care 101" and "The Role of the Foster Parent in Family Reunification" (which was recommended by the Calaveras County Citizen's Review Panel). Training development continues to be a long-term goal.</i></p>	<p>Columbia College Foster/Kin Advisory Board, All Children's Services social workers, Local Foster Family Agency (FFA) social workers</p>
<p>2.1.3 Contact the substitute care providers and local FFA staff to receive the series of foster care trainings on a quarterly basis.</p>	<p>6 months to 3 years (10/01/2008 to 4/30/2011)</p>	<p>Update: <i>The FFA staff and our relative/NREFM care providers were contacted regarding the two FKAB trainings. Unfortunately, the trainings were poorly attended. We continue to have a social worker attend the FKAB quarterly meetings where they are strategizing ways to increase training attendance. This continues to be a long-term goal.</i></p>	<p>Columbia College Foster/Kin Advisory Board, All Children's Services social workers, Local Foster Family Agency (FFA) social workers</p>
<p>Strategy 2. 2 Social Workers will continue to inquire about any potential relative and Non-Related Extended Family Member (NREFM) placement possibilities from the parents and children that we are working with.</p>		<p>Strategy Rationale Preliminary analysis shows that SCPs who are relatives are less likely to ask for the children in their care to be moved than non-related foster parents. Additionally, Emergency Response social workers are accustomed to inquiring about potential relative and NREFM placements than are Continuing social workers.</p>	

Milestone	2.2.1 Include inquiring about potential relative and NREFM placements on the case check lists.	Timeframe	6 months (10/1/2008) Update: The case check list was updated and now includes inquiring about potential relative and NREFM placements.	Assigned to	All Children's Services social workers
	2.2.2 If placement cannot be made with any identified relatives, then at least include them in the child's visitation plan.		6 months (10/1/2008) Update: When placement is not made with relatives who request it, they are regularly included in the child's visitation plan.		All Children's Services social workers
	2.2.3 Inquire from all identified relatives that are located about any other relatives with whom the children can potentially be placed.		6 months (10/1/2008) Update: When placement is not made with relatives who request it, social workers are routinely asking about other relatives for potential placement.		All Children's Services social workers
Strategy 2. 3 Work more closely with the SCPs and applicable FFAs.			Strategy Rationale Keeping each other alerted to what is going on with our foster children's placements will help identify potential placement issues before notices to move foster children are given.		

Milestone	2.3.1 Social workers will meet with the SCPs in person, in the placement home, at least once per month. If in-person contact cannot be made, the social workers will at least contact the SCPs via telephone. Telephone contact in lieu of in-person contact will only occur at a maximum of once every 3 months.	Timeframe	6 months (10/1/2008) <i>Update: According to SafeMeasures®, 98.5% (62 of 63) of the monthly SCP contacts were made in September 2008, and 100% of the monthly SCP contacts were met in October, November and December. According to Business Objects, of those contacts that occurred, the majority were made in-person although not always in the placement home. Telephone or written contact did occur in lieu of in-person contact and for that reason we will extend the timeframe for this milestone to 10/1/09.</i>	Assigned to	All Children's Services social workers
	2.3.2 If placement issues are identified, the social worker will meet with all parties involved in the issue individually, and then as a collective group to discuss the issue and identify possible solutions. The gathering may be held informally or through a formal FGDM or TDM meeting.		9 months (1/1/2009) <i>Update: Generally, the social workers are trying to resolve the placement issues as they are identified. If a 7-day Notice is provided, then we are conducting a TDM to see if the placement can be salvaged. We implemented using TDMs for this purpose in December 2008.</i>		All Children's Services social workers, FGDM/TDM social worker

	<p>2.3.3 If the placement cannot be salvaged, the social worker will make arrangements for the child being moved to meet with the proposed new SCPs prior to the formal move taking place so that the social worker, foster child and SCPs can gauge if the new placement is going to be a good fit.</p>		<p>9 months (1/1/2009)</p> <p>Update: One of the four Continuing social workers piloted this strategy on all (four) of his placement moves. He reported that all four of these children remain in their new placements and have not experienced subsequent placement changes. The timeframe for the rest of the Continuing social workers will be shifted to 9/1/2009.</p>		All Children's Services social workers
Milestone	<p>2.3.4 Maintain a binder of the strengths of the foster parents that we have placed children with so that we can better tailor the placement.</p>	Timeframe	<p>9 months (1/1/2009)</p> <p>Update: We have not established a binder, so we are adjusting the timeframe for this milestone to 1/1/2010.</p>	Assigned to	All Children's Services social workers
	<p>2.3.5 Work with the Columbia College FKAB and local FFAs to develop a "foster parent support group".</p>		<p>12 months (5/1/2009)</p> <p>Update: The Columbia College FKAB Chair has been in touch with the BHS Parent Partner regarding using the monthly "Parents Unplugged" support groups as this forum, but it has not been established yet. Therefore, the target date will be shifted to 1/1/2010.</p>		Children's Services social worker assigned to the Columbia College FKAB

Milestone	2.3.6 Encourage local FFAs to recruit and train foster parents in Calaveras County to become Family to Family foster homes.	Timeframe	12 months (5/1/2009) <i>Update: The Services Program Manager has met individually with the two local FFAs regarding this SIP strategy. Both expressed their willingness. Additionally, the Calaveras County Blue Ribbon Commission was established in December 2008 and met with Judge Lenard Edwards in January 2009. One of Judge Edwards' recommendations was to initiate "ice breaker" meetings between the foster parents and the originating parents so that they can meet face-to-face to discuss the child's individual strengths and challenges and establish a better working relationship with one another.</i>	Assigned to	Services Program Manager, Children's Services Supervisors
	2.3.7 Refer foster youth to local mentoring programs to help the child adjust to their out-of-home placement as needed.		6 months (10/1/2008) <i>Update: Referrals are made to the Calaveras Youth Mentoring Program when the social worker determines that the youth would benefit from it.</i>		All Children's Services social workers

Describe any additional systemic factors needing to be addressed that support the improvement plan goals.

Currently, foster parents who are certified through a FFA are required to receive a certain number of training hours annually in order to have children placed in their homes. They are provided with a menu of topics to choose from. Additionally, the only annual training that is required for relatives/NREFMs to continue to have children placed in their homes happens during the annual placement assessments. Therefore, we can only encourage all of the Calaveras County foster parents and relative/NREFM SCPs to attend the series of quarterly trainings.

***Update:** Due to the poor turnout to the two trainings that were conducted during the past year, we will continue to encourage attendance and*

participation from the FFA staff and foster parents.

Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.

We envision the series of quarterly SCP training will also include our Children's Services social workers as well as the local FFA social workers. We have also identified various FFA training topics for our staff, such as what rules are theirs versus what is governed through Community Care Licensing (for example, alone time for older teens).

Update: Training for our staff by our local FFA staff has not been discussed or scheduled. Therefore, it will continue to be included as a need in this section.

Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.

The CWHSA does not perform foster family licensing functions, and as a result there are very few county licensed foster homes. We will be relying heavily on our FFA partners, since virtually all of our non-Relative/NREFM placements are through FFAs. We will also need to continue working closely with the Columbia College Foster/Kin Advisory Board. Additionally, the Calaveras County Behavioral Health Services already offers monthly "Parents Unplugged" support groups for parents (including foster parents) of children with serious behavioral difficulties. The Parent Partner suggested that we could use this forum for the proposed foster parent support group meetings.

Update: The Columbia College FKAB Chair has been in touch with the BHS Parent Partner regarding using the monthly "Parents Unplugged" support groups as this forum, but it has not been established yet. Therefore, this goal will continue to be included in this section.

Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.

None known at this time.

Outcome/Systemic Factor Timely Adoptions					
County's Current Performance: The County's rate of timely adoptions within twenty four months were 0 during 2005 (0.0%), 2 out of 6 (33.3%) were finalized during 2006, and during the review period of 10/01/2006 to 09/30/2007 three out of twelve (25%) were finalized.					
Update: According to the April 2009 Quarterly Data Report for the period of 10/1/2007 to 9/30/2008, the County's rate of timely adoption within twenty four months increased to 8 out of 11 (72.7%).					
Improvement Goal 3.0 Decrease the time from termination of reunification to finalization of adoption for children, thus reducing the length if time children are in permanent placement.					
Strategy 3. 1 Improve the County's timeliness in determining Paternity Status			Strategy Rationale Preliminary analysis shows that there may have been significant delays in determining paternity status on parents who are absent or fail to participate in court hearings.		
Milestone	3.1.1 Emergency Response social workers will determine paternity status by the Dispositional Hearing. If parents are absent and paternity cannot be determined before the Dispositional Hearing, Continuing social workers will continue efforts to determine paternity status.	Timeframe	Ongoing Update: The Deputy County Counsel revised the paternity section in the court report to better identify each parents' paternity status. Continuing social workers are directed to continue to locate absent parents through Due Diligence efforts.	Assigned to	All Children's Services Social Workers

	<p>3.1.2 The case transfer checklist used by the CWHSA Emergency Response social workers will be revised to include paternity status, indicating whether paternity status has been established, or whether there is a need for the continuing social workers to continue efforts.</p>		<p>6 Months (10/01/2008)</p> <p>Update: <i>The case transfer checklist was revised to address paternity. Additionally, Emergency Response packets were created and include all relevant paternity documents.</i></p>		<p>All Children's Services Social Workers</p>
<p>Strategy 3. 2 Utilize the Judicial Council Form JV500 (Inquiry to Parentage) to determine absent parent paternity status.</p>			<p>Strategy Rationale The JV500 Form will be utilized at the onset of the dependency case, so that efforts to locate absent parents will be expedited. The form will help parentage to be determined before permanency is reached.</p>		

Milestone	<p>3.2.1 At the onset of the dependency case, Emergency Response social workers will conduct a due diligence search on absent parents and mail the JV500 form to the last known address.</p> <p>3.2.2 Continuing social workers will file Notice Of Publication on absent parents when all efforts to locate them have been unsuccessful.</p> <p>3.2.3 Referrals to CDSS Adoptions District Office will be submitted with paternity information completed and updated as necessary.</p>	Timeframe	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Update: <i>The use of the JV- 500 was implemented to further help determine paternity. The JV-500 is being provided to parents at the Detention Hearings by the Deputy County Counsel.</i></p> <p>Update: <i>Continuing social workers have filed Notice of Publication on absent parents. During this period two (2) cases required Notice of Publication to locate or notify absent parents.</i></p> <p>Update: <i>The case transfer checklist must be completed by the Emergency Response social workers before the cases can be transferred to the Continuing social workers. If paternity information is missing, the reasons why are stated on the checklist for the Continuing social worker to complete.</i></p>	Assigned to	<p>Emergency Response social Workers</p> <p>Continuing social workers</p> <p>All Children's Services social workers</p>
<p>Strategy 3.3 Develop timelines for CWHSA, CDSS Adoptions District Office and prospective adoptive parents to ensure prompt completion of the adoption process.</p>			<p>Strategy Rationale Through a collaborative effort with CDSS Adoptions District Office and prospective adoptive parents, we can reduce the timeframe of adoptions being stalled or delayed due to the lack of progress continuing that is required by all parties.</p>		

Milestone	3.3.1 CWHSA Emergency Response social workers will submit adoptions referrals prior to transfer of cases to the Continuing social workers.	Timeframe	On-going <i>Update: All Emergency Response social workers do complete the adoptions referrals prior to transferring the case to the Continuing social workers.</i>	Assigned to	Emergency Response social workers
	3.3.2 CWHSA social workers and CDSS Adoptions social workers will meet monthly to discuss the progress of referred cases. Updated status will be tracked by both agencies to ensure efficiency and timeliness.		On-going <i>Update: CDSS Adoption social worker representatives come to the CWHSA office on the every third Wednesday of the month. Both agencies have access to SafeMeasures® to track the status of cases.</i>		All Children's Services social workers, Children's Services Supervisors, CDSS Adoption social workers

Describe any additional systemic factors needing to be addressed that support the improvement plan goals.

Concurrent Planning referrals are made by the CWHSA Children's Services social workers to the CDSS Adoptions social workers whenever the subject of the referral is under the age of 4 years old. CDSS Adoptions social workers may need to start working on these referrals sooner so that there is not a delay in finalizing the adoption of these children if the case progresses to that stage.

***Update:** The CWHSA Emergency Response social workers complete the adoption referrals on all cases after the Dispositional Hearing. All referrals are then sent to the CDSS Adoptions District Office for the adoption social workers to work with the Continuing social workers on the process of adoption.*

Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.

The Calaveras County Counsel's Office's Deputy County Counsel will be providing a refresher training on legal issues in regards to establishing paternity to all Children's Services social workers. The CDSS Adoptions District Office will provide refresher training to the CWHSA Children's Services social workers on the adoption process. It is also anticipated that the CDSS Adoptions District Office will provide refresher training for the CWHSA Children's Services social workers on the Kaleidoscope program and the use of the Heart Gallery for the older and hard to place children.

***Update:** The Deputy County Counsel updated the paternity section in all the court reports and provided training on the new changes. Training*

by CDSS Adoptions District Office staff has not occurred within the past year. It continues to be a long-term goal.

Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.

The CDSS Adoptions District Office will be partnering with Lilliput Children's Services to assist in completing home studies. CDSS Adoptions District Office may partner with other FFAs in Calaveras County to assist with completing the home studies with families in Calaveras County.

Update: *The CDSS Adoptions District Office continues to contract with Lilliput Children's Services to assist in completing home studies. The CWHSA is not aware that the CDSS Adoptions District Office has expanded their contract to other service providers for the assistance of completing home studies.*

Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.

There are some confidentiality laws that prohibit the sharing of certain adoption information. Open communication between CWHSA and CDSS Adoptions District Office is essential so that we can improve the timeliness of pending adoptions.

Update: *The Deputy County Counsel has been working with the CDSS Adoptions District Office Supervisors to determine what information can be shared among agencies. Dialogue between both agencies continues regarding confidentiality legal issues.*

Outcome/Systemic Factor Reduce and increase least restrictive out-of-home placements.					
County's Current Performance: The County Probation Department within the last twenty four months was at a high of eleven group home placements. The group home placements were at least level 10. These placements also included the highest intensive level which was out-of-county boot camps.					
Update: <i>The Calaveras County Probation Department during the last twelve months has six group home placements and three out-of-county boot camp placements.</i>					
Improvement Goal 4.0 Decrease the level of high intensive group home placements and boot camps.					
Strategy 4. 1 The Probation department will utilize Calaveras County Behavioral Health Substance Abuse Programs and the Calaveras County Children System of Care.			Strategy Rationale The probation department has an assigned officer to sit on the Calaveras County Behavioral Health Board. The probation officers also present and staff their cases at the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) weekly meetings.		
Milestone	4.1.1 Refer probation youth to Calaveras County Substance Abuse program as a preventative measure to reduce escalating substance use. Preventative services to be offered at the onset of the minor being referred to the probation department or before wardship.	Timeframe	On-going	Assigned to	Intake Officer, All Probation Officers, Probation Officer Unit Supervisor
	4.1.2 Probation officers will complete referrals to the Calaveras County System of Care Program when ward is at risk of out-of-home placement.		Before wardship is established if possible or warranted.		Intake Officer, All Probation Officers, Probation Officer Unit Supervisor
Strategy 4. 2 Reduce the high level of placements from group home care or out-of-county boot camps.			Strategy Rationale The probation department will use the Non-Extended Family Member policy and procedures to locate an appropriate placement for the youth. The probation department will research all family members for possible placement.		

Milestone	4.2.1 Probation Officers will diligently research all family members or non-related family members to be a possible placement option for the probation youth.	Timeframe	On-Going	Assigned to	Intake Officer, All Probation Officers, Probation Officer Unit Supervisor
	4.2.2 The probation officers will incorporate the "Team Decision Making" (TDM) model and use when placement is at risk of failing or going to a higher level of care.		November 2009 and On-Going		Intake Officer, All Probation Officers, Probation Officer Unit Supervisor
	4.2.3 The probation officers will work with the out-of-county boot camps to reduce the confinement time in placement and transition the youth to a lower level of care.		On-Going		Intake Officer, All Probation Officers, Probation Officer Unit Supervisor

Describe any additional systemic factors needing to be addressed that support the improvement plan goals.

The probation department relies on community based services by its community partners. The goal is to achieve the youth to remain in the community or origin and reduce criminal behavior. Through the coordination and utilization of the community services the prevention of higher level placements will/can be reduced.

Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.

The probation department will send a probation officer to placement core training. The probation department will receive training on the policy and procedures of TDM.

Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.

The Calaveras County Behavioral Health Agency will continue to work with the probation department in what services are available to service their population.

Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.

There continues to be restrictions of the confidentiality between agencies that serve the youth. Communication can improve outcomes when agencies work together and focus on the needs of the youths.

Attachment A – CWSOIP FUNDS

Program / Expenditures	Approximate Amounts
Behavioral Health Services – Psychiatric Social Worker to facilitate “Beyond Talking” (Parent Support group / Parent Education classes)	\$41,000
Legal Notice for absent parents to terminate parental rights	\$1,600
Child Care, Healthy Snacks and Supplies (hand-outs/packets) for Beyond Talking	\$1,286
Juvenile Probation Officer Visits with Parents and Children	\$9,600
Placement Training for Juvenile Probation Officer	\$400

Approximate Total = \$53,886

The remainder of the \$60,554 total allocation (\$50,554 for CWHSA and \$10,000 for Probation) has been claimed in support staff costs and overhead by the departments for these activities.

Description

In an effort to reduce the number of children who re-enter foster care, the CWHSA has made a concerted effort to revamp the Parent Education that is offered and is available in Calaveras County. We reimbursed our partners at the Calaveras County Behavioral Health Services (BHS) for a Psychiatric Social Worker to facilitate weekly Parent Support Groups for parents new to the Child Welfare Services system. The purpose of these support groups is for the parents to overcome their fears, frustrations, anger and denial so that they can eventually attend – and learn from – Parent Education classes. Further, the BHS Psychiatric Social Worker streamlined the classes that she offered to reduce redundancy and make it more customized to the needs of the participants.

We are required to publish Legal Notices in an attempt to contact missing parents so that we can terminate Parental Rights in order for children to be adopted. We paid \$1,600 in fees for such Legal Notices.

Additionally, we paid a child care provider to be available at the weekly Parent Support groups and Parent Education classes for those parents with child care issues. We also provided healthy snacks for the participants and children who attended, as well as hand-outs and packets for the participants to take home.

The Juvenile Probation Department has historically struggled in keeping families engaged in their children's cases. Monthly visits between Probation Officers and parents of the children they supervise helps to bring the families back into the process. Finally, a Juvenile Probation Officer received Relative/NREFM placement training in an effort to increase less restrictive out-of-home placements.

